

Serial No. 09/911,996

Atty. Docket No. 19361-495600

**REMARKS**

By way of this amendment, claim 6 has been cancelled, and claims 1, 8 and 9 have been amended. New claims 19-25 have been added. Claims 1-5, 7-9 and 19-25 are currently pending in the application. Applicant hereby requests further examination and reconsideration in view of the following remarks.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-5 and 7-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Endo et al and claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Doughman. These grounds of rejection are respectfully traversed in light of the present amendment.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 6. Namely, claim 1 now recites that the at least one plug contact comprises a clamping screw at the rear end of the at least one plug contact, and the clamping screw extends in a radial direction with respect to an axial extension of the plug contact and is accessible in the first latching position of the fitting part. In light of the fact that the Examiner has indicated that claim 6 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, it is submitted that this amendment causes claim 1 to be allowable. Claims 2-5 and 7 depend from claim 1 and are thus also believed to be allowable. Independent claims 8 and 9 have both been amended in a manner similar to claim 1, that is to include the subject matter of claim 6, and are thus also believed to be allowable.

Newly submitted claims 19-25 depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 9 and are thus also believed to be allowable. These claims are similar in scope to previously cancelled claims 11-17 and further define the latch element and expandable area recited in claim 9.



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In view of the above, it is submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the objections and rejections is requested. Allowance of claims 1-5 and 7-9 at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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